

December 18, 1970

Mr. A. R. Day
Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Department of State Building
Washington, D.C. 20451

Dear Pete,

Quite by accident I had an opportunity to raise a question about the statistics of production and use of phosphorus to Dr. John Strickland at the Stanford Research Institute.. This was of interest in connection with the proposal for monitoring potential nerve gas production by a chemical economics approach.

I was very pleased to get this package of information which I found quite informative and yet very compact. I just have to observe that the rapid growth rate of production of PCl_3 to a current level that must be over 60,000 tons per year, and at a price of less than 15¢ per pound does not offer much optimism for this route of surveillance. I was also surprised to discover the commercial significance of elemental phosphorus for example that a good deal of phosphorus ultimately intended for fertilizer production is shipped as the element in order to save freight costs! New developments in modifying fabrics for flame retardation will also undoubtedly stimulate this segment of the market.

None of these instances will be new to you but I thought you might find it valuable to have this corroborative information in your files.

I was sufficiently impressed by this response to make a further inquiry about the Chemical Economics Handbook service that SRI provides and under separate cover I am also communicating their descriptive information about it. Besides obtaining the handbook participation would also give access to a very active and well informed group whose availability on very short notice might well become a very important asset during the course of future negotiations. I am told that the concessional price for government agencies has been set at so low a figure that the institute does not actively look for subscriptions in this area, but needless to say they would have no such reservations in possible contributions to the efforts of your agency.

As you are probably aware, SRI has no ~~co-operate~~ connections of any kind, at the present time, with Stanford University.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr